

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 IO-14 SSM-05 H-02 ISO-00
PA-02 SIG-03 PM-05 MCT-01 JUSE-00 INR-10 INRE-00
NSAE-00 /075 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/P:WBHARRIS:RGH
APPROVED BY NEA/P:GFSHERMAN
PA/PRS - MR. CARTER
H - MR. FLATEN
SSM - MR. MC ANDREW
NEA/IAI - MR. SMITH
NEA/ARN - MR. DRAPER
NEA/EGY - MR. NEWBERRY
NEA/ARP - MR. TWINAM

-----126516 020109Z /62

O 020019Z MAY 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
USMISSION SINAI
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
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USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
JCS WASHDC 0000

CIA WASHDC 0000
NSC WASHDC 0000
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN
DOD WASHDC
USICA WASHDC

UNCLAS STATE 111018

CINCEUR FOR POLAD, TEL AVIV FOR PAO, DELIVER BY 9 A.M.

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - MAY 1

1. FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE
EXCERPTS FROM DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING FOR MAY 1, 1978.
FYI ONLY, SPOKESMAN TODAY WAS HODDING CARTER III.

Q. CAN YOU CLARIFY WHAT THE STATE DEPARTMENT TOLD
MR. EILTS TO CLARIFY TO THE EGYPTIANS BECAUSE NOW THERE
SEEMS TO BE A STATEMENT FROM CAIRO TODAY SAYING ESSENTIALLY
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THE U.S. REJECTS THE BEGIN PLAN AFTER THE PRESIDENT SAID
IT WOULD BE --

A. OUR POSITION IS UNCHANGED ON THIS. WE HAVE SAID, AND
I REPEAT, THAT WHAT MR. BEGIN HAS PROPOSED DOES PROVIDE
THE BASIS FOR NEGOTIATIONS ON THE QUESTION. THAT IS THE
POSITION AND WE SIMPLY RESTATED THAT POSITION TO THE
EGYPTIANS.

Q. BUT THE PRESIDENT IS QUOTED AS SAYING THAT THIS
WOULD BE A BASIS FOR A SETTLEMENT, NOT A NEGOTIATION.
THERE IS A SLIGHT DIFFERENCE.

A. I AM RESTATING WHAT THE POLICY IS AND WHAT IT HAS
BEEN SINCE LAST MARCH.

Q. ARE YOU TAKING BACK WHAT THE PRESIDENT HAS SAID?

A. I AM SAYING THAT OUR POLICY IS, AS THE WHITE
HOUSE REITERATED YESTERDAY, THAT THESE ARE THE BASIS FOR
NEGOTIATIONS.

Q. ARE YOU SAYING THEN, IN OTHER WORDS, THE PRESIDENT
MISSPOKE?

A. I AM SIMPLY TELLING YOU WHAT POLICY IS AND THAT THIS

IS WHAT BOTH THE WHITE HOUSE AND THE STATE DEPARTMENT AGREE.

Q. BUT THE PRESIDENT REPRESENTS THE U.S. POLICY. THE PRESIDENT SAID A BASIS FOR SETTLEMENT, SUBSTANTIALLY A BASIS FOR SETTLEMENT.

A. I DON'T HAVE A TRANSCRIPT OF THAT INTERVIEW. I CAN TELL YOU, HOWEVER, WHAT THE POLICY OF THE UNITED UNCLASSIFIED

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STATES GOVERNMENT IS.

Q. WHAT IS THE AMERICAN ADMINISTRATION'S VIEWS ON THE FUTURE OF THE WEST BANK AND THE GAZA STRIP?

A. WE HAVE BEEN THROUGH THIS. THE DRILL HAS NOT CHANGED. WE ARE IN THE SAME POSITION THAT WE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN AND THAT ULTIMATELY, AS WE HAVE ALWAYS SAID, THE DETERMINATION OF THAT AND THE OTHER OUTSTANDING QUESTIONS HAVE TO BE BETWEEN THE PARTIES THEMSELVES.

Q. COULD WE GO BACK HERE TO THE ORIGINAL PRINCIPLE FOR A SECOND AND ASSUME THAT A PRESIDENTIAL QUOTE HAS SOME IMPORTANCE IN DETERMINING WHAT AMERICAN POLICY IS. THE PRESIDENT IS QUOTED AS SAYING THAT HE BELIEVES THAT A PERMANENT SETTLEMENT WILL BE BASED SUBSTANTIALLY UPON BEGIN'S HOME RULE PROPOSAL. I HAVEN'T HEARD HIM SAY ANYTHING LIKE THAT BEFORE. IS THAT THEN INACCURATE? IS THAT WHAT HE SAID?

A. I DON'T KNOW. I DON'T HAVE A TRANSCRIPT. I DO NOT KNOW THAT A TRANSCRIPT IS AVAILABLE AND, THEREFORE, I DON'T KNOW WHAT HE SAID. I KNOW WHAT I AM AUTHORIZED TO SAY WHAT THE POLICY IS, WHICH IS WHAT WE HAVE SAID BEFORE ON THE SUBJECT ON A NUMBER OF OCCASIONS AND I AM REPEATING HERE.

Q. SO THAT, THE BEGIN PROPOSAL, AS YOU HAVE ALWAYS SAID, IS A BASIS FOR NEGOTIATION?

A. YES.

Q. AND THAT ULTIMATELY THE SIDES THEMSELVES HAVE TO UNCLASSIFIED

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DECIDE?

A. YES.

Q. SO THAT ANY IDEA OF THE BEGIN PROPOSAL BEING SUBSTANTIALLY THE BASIS FOR A PERMANENT SETTLEMENT JUST IS WAY OFF THE MARK?

A. IT IS A BASIS FOR A NEGOTIATION.

Q. EVENTUALLY WHEN YOU ARE ABLE TO GET IN TOUCH WITH JODY AND GET THE TRANSCRIPT, IF IT TURNS OUT THAT THE PRESIDENT DID SAY WHAT WAS REPORTED, WOULD YOU THEN BE NOW RETREATING FROM THAT STATEMENT?

A. NO. I HAVE BEEN IN TOUCH. WHAT I AM SAYING ACCURATELY REFLECTS THE PRESIDENT'S POSITION.

Q. HAS ANYONE SUGGESTED HE MIGHT HAVE BEEN MISQUOTED? HAS ANYONE DENIED?

A. I AM REALLY NOT IN THAT POSITION. I WOULD SUGGEST YOU MIGHT WANT TO ASK THE WHITE HOUSE THAT. I DO NOT HAVE A TRANSCRIPT OF THE INTERVIEW.

Q. WAS THE ORIGINAL INTERVIEW TAPED OR WAS IT TAKEN VERBATIM?

A. I AM NOT AWARE OF A TRANSCRIPT.

Q. HAS THE GOVERNMENT TAPED THE INTERVIEW?

A. I DONT KNOW.

Q. DOES THE SECRETARY BELIEVE THAT OUR F-15 IS SUPERIOR, ON A PAR WITH, OR INFERIOR TO THE FRENCH F-1?
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A. I HAVE NO IDEA. I AM NOT A MILITARY EXPERT NOR IS HE. I DONT KNOW THE CHARACTERISTICS. ASK DEFENSE.

Q. SENATOR ANDERSON OF MINNESOTA HAS WRITTEN PRESIDENT CARTER ASKING FOR FULL INVESTIGATION OF FURTHER REPORTS OF WEAPONS SOLD TO THE SAUDI ARABIANS WHICH HAVE BEEN FOUND IN THE POSSESSION OF THE PLO. SINCE SAUDI ARABIA GIVES THE PLO MILLIONS OF DOLLARS EVERY YEAR, COULD YOU TELL US WHAT FIRM GUARANTEE DO WE HAVE THAT THE F-15'S PROPOSED FOR SAUDI ARABIA WILL NOT FIND THEIR WAY TO ANOTHER COUNTRY OR EVEN TO THE PLO?

A. THAT QUESTION I THINK HAS BEEN ADDRESSED BEFORE ON THE QUESTION OF THEIR TRANSFER AND IN ANY CASE THE THIRD COUNTRY OR THIRD PARTY TRANSFER PROVISIONS ARE IN EFFECT FOR ALL RECIPIENTS OF OUR AID.

Q. THAT IS RIGHT. BUT A TOP ISRAELI MILITARY SPOKESMAN HAS POINTED OUT THAT THEY HAVE DEFINITELY IDENTIFIED THESE HAND GRENADES IN THE PLO AS COMING FROM THE UNITED STATES THAT WERE GIVEN TO THE SAUDI ARABIANS. IF WE GIVE THESE F-15'S, WHAT REALLY IRON CLAD GUARANTEE DO WE HAVE THAT THE SAUDIS JUST WONT PASS THEM ON, EVEN TO THE PLO?

A. THE PREMISE, OF COURSE, IS ONE THAT I AM NOT ACCEPTING AND WHICH WE HAVE LOOKED INTO AND HAVE ANSWERED TO THE BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE THAT THOSE THINGS WERE NOT TRANSFERRED TO THE PLO.

SECOND, THE SAME ASSURANCES WE HAVE FROM EVERYONE WHO UNCLASSIFIED

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IS A RECIPIENT OF OUR AID IN THAT CASE. THAT IS TO SAY THE GUARANTEES WHICH ARE LEGALLY REQUIRED APPLY TO EVERYONE, SAUDIS OR ANYONE ELSE.

Q. IS THE ADMINISTRATION CONSIDERING THE POSSIBILITY OF RECOMMENDING MORE, I THINK IT IS F-15 PLANE SALES TO ISRAEL, INCREASING THE NUMBER TO 25 FROM 15?

A. I AM NOT AWARE OF A CHANGE IN THE NUMBERS IN OUR PRESENTATION ABROAD.

Q. I AM NOT ASKING ABOUT THE PRESENTATION, BUT WHETHER YOU ARE HOLDING AS A RESERVE THE POSSIBILITY OF INCREASING THE NUMBER DURING THE RECENT DISCUSSIONS?

A. I THINK WHAT WE OFFERED IS WHAT WE CONSIDERED TO BE A BALANCED SET OF PROPOSALS AND I KNOW OF NO PLANS TO CHANGE THAT.

Q. DOES THAT MEAN THAT YOUR PROPOSALS WILL STAND EXACTLY AS THEY WERE MADE AND NO CHANGE WHATSOEVER?

A. I AM NOT AWARE OF ANY PLANS TO CHANGE IT.

Q. THERE HAS BEEN A REPORT IN A KUWAITI PAPER SAYING THAT THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT AGREED TO LET THE PLO SET UP AN INFORMATION OFFICE IN WASHINGTON.

A. LET ME SAY ON THAT SUBJECT THAT ON APRIL 17TH A MAN NAMED HATIM I. HUSSEINI REGISTERED WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE UNDER THE TERMS OF AMERICAN LAW AS A LOBBYIST TO OPEN SOMETHING CALLED THE PALESTINIAN INFORMATION CENTER.

Q. AS A LOBBYIST OR A FOREIGN AGENT?

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A. I BELIEVE THAT HE HAS TO IDENTIFY HIMSELF IN THAT CASE AS TO WHO HE IS REPRESENTING AND WHAT HIS CAUSE IS.

THE OFFICE IS AT 1326-18TH STREET. HE HAS BEEN OPERATING, I UNDERSTAND, THOUGH I WILL REFER YOU TO THE FORMS HE FILLED OUT AT JUSTICE SINCE I DONT HAVE THEM, AS HEAD OF THE ARAB INFORMATION CENTER HERE FOR SOME TIME.

HE IS, I UNDERSTAND, A JORDANIAN CITIZEN. SINCE I HAVE NOT SEEN THE REGISTRATION PAPERS, I WOULD HESITATE TO GO MUCH FURTHER THAN THIS AS TO PRECISE DEFINITION OF WHAT HE SAYS HE IS ABOUT. WE ARE LOOKING INTO THAT. APPARENTLY THAT OFFICE IS IN BUSINESS.

Q. WOULD THERE BE ANY PROBLEM AS FAR AS THE STATE DEPARTMENT IS CONCERNED IF HE SAYS HE IS REPRESENTING THE PLO?

A. WELL, THERE ARE TWO QUESTIONS HERE. THE FIRST IS, AS YOU KNOW, WE HAVE HAD A POLICY AND DO HAVE A POLICY OF DISCOURAGING THE OPENING OF PLO INFORMATION CENTERS. THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S POLICY ON THAT REMAINS THE SAME. I WILL REPEAT ALSO THAT IF IT IS, IN FACT, A PLO INFORMATION CENTER FOR A PLO RUN ORGANIZATION, AND I DO NOT KNOW THE ANSWERS TO THESE QUESTIONS, THAT WE WOULD, OF COURSE, ADHERE TO THE RULE OF NO CONTACT BETWEEN AMERICAN OFFICIALS AND THE PEOPLE WHO RUN IT.

Q. YOU MEAN YOU THINK IT MIGHT HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH THE PLO?

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A. I DONT KNOW. WE ARE LOOKING INTO THAT RIGHT NOW.

Q. IT'S BEING INVESTIGATED BY INTELLIGENCE?

A. THE STATE DEPARTMENT IS SEEKING TO DETERMINE THIS FACT. AS I SAY, I THINK IF YOU GOT THE REGISTRATION PAPERS, WHICH I DONT HAVE, IT WOULD SAY WHAT HE SAYS HE'S ABOUT. I UNDERSTAND IT'S, ROUGHLY SPEAKING, TO BRING TO THE ATTENTION OF THE AMERICAN PUBLIC, AND PUBLIC OFFICIALS, VIEWS ON THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM AND MOVEMENT.

Q. YOU'RE NOT SAYING THAT THE STATE DEPARTMENT WOULD INITIATE ANY ACTION OR TRY TO GET THE AMERICAN

GOVERNMENT TO INITIATE ANY ACTION TO CLOSE THIS OFFICE?

A. TO BE PERFECTLY HONEST, THE QUESTION LEGALLY DOESN'T ARISE SO LONG AS HE COMPLIES, OR ANY AGENT COMPLIES, WITH THE LAWS OF THE UNITED STATES. AS YOU KNOW, THERE IS ALREADY A PLO INFORMATION OFFICE IN NEW YORK. I'M SIMPLY SAYING THAT WE HAVE DISCOURAGED PUBLICLY IN THE PAST AND DISCOURAGE NOW SUCH AN ORGANIZATION.

Q. DOES THAT MEAN THAT ANY TERRORIST ORGANIZATION, BE IT JAPANESE, ISRAELI, ARABIC, OR WHATEVER, IT MAY OPEN AN INFORMATION OFFICE IN THE UNITED STATES IF THEY GO THROUGH ALL THE LEGAL PROCEDURES THAT THE PLO OFFICE HAS GONE THROUGH?

A. I HAVE PROBLEMS WITH THAT QUESTION ON SEVERAL COUNTS. THE FIRST IS THAT I AM NOT CAPABLE AT THIS POINT OF IDENTIFYING WHO IT IS THAT HE PURPORTS TO REPRESENT. I DON'T KNOW; I'M LOOKING INTO IT. SECOND, ON THE GENERAL QUESTION OF "TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS," I AM NOT UNCLASSIFIED

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AWARE OF THE LAW THAT THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT HAS TO FOLLOW IN ACCEPTING A REGISTRATION OF AGENTS. AND I THINK THAT THE BEST PLACE FOR THAT ANSWER IS AT JUSTICE WHO IS ENTRUSTED WITH THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR REGISTRATION.

Q. BUT, BY INFERENCE, YOU HAVE BEEN CONFIRMING THIS PROPOSITION.

A. BEFORE YOU WRITE A STORY, OR FILE SOMETHING OR DO ANYTHING ELSE, I'M ASKING YOU TO GO TO JUSTICE WHO HAS THE LEGAL DEFINITIONS.

Q. BUT IN A POSTED REPLY NOT LONG AGO ABOUT THE PLO

OFFICE IN NEW YORK, WHEN AFTER THE ATTACK NEAR TEL AVIV ISRAEL ASKED YOU TO TRY AND CLOSE DOWN, YOU SAID IT WAS LEGALLY ESTABLISHED AND AS LONG AS THEY WERE DOING THEIR JOB LEGALLY, WITHIN THE PROCEDURES OF THE LAW, YOU CANNOT DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT, WHICH MEANS THAT ANYBODY, BY STICKING TO THE LAW, CAN OPEN AN INFORMATION OFFICE HERE.

A. I THINK THAT THE BEST I CAN DO WITH YOU IS THAT AS LONG AS SOMETHING SUCH AS THIS, THEIR INFORMATION CENTER OR WHATEVER, COMPLIES WITH ALL RELEVANT LAWS AND IS STAFFED BY PEOPLE WHO ENTERED THIS COUNTRY LEGALLY, IT CAN REMAIN IN OPERATION, BUT I DON'T KNOW WHAT CATCHES THERE ARE OR STIPULATIONS BEYOND THAT.

Q. IF THEY CAN OPEN LEGALLY, HOW CAN YOU GO ABOUT DISCOURAGING THEM?

A. BECAUSE WE CAN EXPRESS OUR OWN VIEW THAT IT IS NOT UNCLASSIFIED

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WHAT WE BELIEVE TO BE IN OUR INTEREST FOR SUCH AN OPERATION TO BE OPENED.

Q. NOW THAT THIS COMES UP, YOU MAY RECALL THAT AS OF A YEAR AGO, THE STATE DEPARTMENT WAS RESEARCHING THE LAW ON THE STATUS OF PRESIDENTIAL REGULATIONS TO DETERMINE WHETHER OR NOT THE RHODESIAN INFORMATION OFFICE SHOULD CONTINUE TO FUNCTION IN THE UNITED STATES. HAS THE STUDY EVER BEEN COMPLETED?

A. I AM NOT SURE WHAT THE DISPOSITION OF THAT IS. I THINK THE OFFICE IS STILL FUNCTIONING.

Q. THE LAST THING, I BELIEVE, THAT THE RECORD SHOWS IS THAT THE STATE DEPARTMENT WAS COGITATING WHETHER A PRESIDENTIAL, EXECUTIVE ORDER, WAS TO BE ISSUED TO CLOSE THAT OFFICE IN COMPLIANCE WITH U.N. RESOLUTION BANNING THE OPERATION OF SUCH OFFICES. CAN WE GET A CURRENT READING ON THE STATE OF THAT CONTINUING STUDY?

A. I'LL TAKE THE QUESTION.

Q. HODDING, CAN YOU SAY WHETHER PRIME MINISTER BEGIN'S TALKS HERE TODAY, WHICH I GUESS ARE GOING ON FOR THREE HOURS OR MORE, WERE SUGGESTED BY HIM OR BY THE AMERICAN SIDE? HE SAID ON ARRIVING THIS MORNING THAT HE WAS GRATEFUL THAT THE ADMINISTRATION AGREED TO HAVE THESE TALKS, INDICATING THAT HE HAD SUGGESTED THEM.

A. I WOULDN'T WANT TO GO BEYOND THAT, BUT I'LL SEE IF I CAN DETERMINE. I'M SURE THEY MUTUALLY AGREED THAT IT WOULD BE A GOOD IDEA TO HAVE THE TALKS.

Q. AS A MATTER OF PROCEDURE, IF THIS GENTLEMAN, HUSSEINI, GOES TO THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE AND FILES, IS THERE THEN A RULING, OR IS IT AUTOMATIC?
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A. I THINK ONCE THEY DETERMINE THAT HE HAS ACCURATELY REPRESENTED HIMSELF AND HAS FILED ACCORDING TO THE LAWS AND HAS MADE NO MISSTATEMENT OF FACT IN IT, AND UNDER WHAT HE HAS FILED HE IS IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE LAWS, I THINK AT THAT POINT IT'S JUSTICE'S PREROGATIVE AND OBLIGATION TO GO AHEAD WITH ALLOWING IT TO OPERATE.

Q. DOES JUSTICE CONSIDER IF STATE HAS ANY OPINION ABOUT IT?

A. FRANKLY, IT DOES NOT ARISE IN A LEGAL SENSE AT ALL. OUR POSITION IS ONE WHICH IS WELL UNDERSTOOD, AND THAT IS A PUBLIC POSITION; BUT OUR POSITION DOES NOT HAVE A LEGAL WEIGHT IN JUSTICE'S DETERMINATION.

Q. YOU SAID THAT IF IT TURNS OUT TO BE THAT HE IS REPRESENTING THE PLO, THAT THEN THE ADMINISTRATION WOULD HAVE NO CONTACT WITH HIM, ACCORDING TO U.S. POLICY. ARE YOU ALSO ENCOURAGING MEMBERS OF CONGRESS NOT TO HAVE CONTACTS WITH PEOPLE WHO REPRESENT POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS?

A. THAT'S ONE OF THE THINGS ABOUT THE SEPARATION OF POWERS IN THIS GOVERNMENT. I'M NOT SAYING ANYTHING TO CONGRESSMEN. I TELL YOU WHAT THE POLICY OF THIS ADMINISTRATION IN THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH OF THE GOVERNMENT IS. I'M NOT GOING TO LECTURE CONGRESSMEN ON THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES.

Q. ON THIS, THE LAST TIME WE HAD A GO-ROUND, IT WAS ALL RESOLVED BECAUSE OF VISA PROBLEMS. DO YOU HAPPEN TO KNOW WHAT KIND OF ENTRY VISA THIS FELLOW HAS?
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A. I DONT KNOW, EXCEPT THAT, AS I SAY, HE'S BEEN HERE QUITE A WHILE.

Q. IS HE A PERMANENT RESIDENT?

A. I DONT KNOW AGAIN, BUT HE'S BEEN RUNNING THE ARAB INFORMATION CENTER HERE FOR SOME TIME.

Q. DO YOU KNOW IF HE IS CONNECTED AT ALL WITH THE NEW YORK OFFICE?

A. NO. LET ME SAY SOMETHING: YOU KNOW WE HAD THIS PENDING APPLICATION FROM, I THINK, 1976. THIS ISN'T THE SAME THING. THIS IS NEW. THAT ONE HAS BEEN HELD IN ABEYANCE.

Q. THAT WAS A PLO?

A. YES, IT WAS.

Q. WHAT HAPPENED TO IT?

A. THAT'S STILL INACTIVE. IT'S NEVER BEEN PURSUED.

Q. IT WAS HELD IN ABEYANCE BECAUSE OF THE PERSON INVOLVED.

A. I UNDERSTAND. ALL I'M SAYING, THOUGH, IS THAT THIS IS SEPARATE FROM THAT. VANCE

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<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

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